

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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POETS.

One spake to a Poet, "And whence hast thou
won
The key to the melodies vagrant that run
And throb along Nature's strong pulse, like a
strain
That haunts us by snatches, yet doth not
attain,
Save in thee, to completeness:
The wind-song, the bird-song, the song of the
leaves,
The heart-song which breathes through them
all, and receives
E'en in giving them sweetness?"

Then he answered, "From God, who to each
at His will
From His fulness gives somewhat the yearn-
ing to still
Of the soul, that as yet He designs not to fill;
For He would not that any should tax Him
and say,
'Thou gavest me nought as I went by the
way
To joy in and bless Thee.'"

And His gifts are *all* blessed; He giveth to
some
Rich boons; they are happy, and so they are
dumb,—
There was Silence in Heaven;

And the strength and the loving, to gaze on
each thing
That they have not, with joy in its beauty,
and sing,
To some He hath given.

These sit in their gladness, all robed and all
crowned,
As guests at Life's banquet, while swift circles
around

Life's rosy joy-bringer:
But a banquet needs music, so *these* in the cold
Stand singing without; though his harp be of
gold,
Wilt thou envy the singer?

For one (was it *one* then?) went forth from the
crowd,

A warrior, chosen, and faithful, and vowed;
Sore-wounded, they found him
With a bright-blazoned banner wrapt round
him, and prest
To his bosom, to stanch its deep death-hurt;
none guessed
That his life-blood welled over it darkly, so
proud
Was the purple that bound him.

Ye sit by the hearth in the cold, bright spring
weather,
At evening, and hear the birds chiming to-
gether;
And ye say, "Happy singers!" forgetting the
trees
Are leafless, and keen winds hold back beyond
the seas
The swallow, blithe comer;
Yet Summer is coming for us as for these,
A long Summer.

Dora Greenwell.

VINES AND BRANCHES.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me,
and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without
me ye can do nothing."—JOHN xv. 5.

It is entirely probable that these words were
spoken in the spring-time, when the vines on
the slopes and terraces about Jerusalem were
opening into leaf and blossom, and when this
analogy would have all the power and beauty
that could come from the object as well as the
subject. There, right before them, and all
about them, are the vines, standing in the
sun. Some of the branches are the genuine

outgrowth of the vine itself; others are only there by grafting. Some are strong, some feeble, and some dead; and the dead, as Jesus is speaking, the vine-dressers are cutting away, that they may not interfere with the living vines or disfigure the vineyards. But, strong, or feeble, or dead, there stand the stems, ready to pour their sap into every branch alike, or, if they make any difference, to give their life to the lowliest first and in the fullest measure, that they which have the less sun may have the more sap, and more at least of life, if they have less of what makes life a blessing. So Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches, and my Father is the husbandman; and every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he pruneth it, that it may bear more fruit. Abide in me, and I in you; for as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

This truth of the vines and the branches is to be understood, first of all, in a natural sense; and we are to set aside, when we look at it in this sense, what we are fond of calling mystery, but ought rather to call obscurity, and to understand that Jesus meant, first, by what he said then, that these men, sitting or standing about him that day, were to be as intimately united to him through their spirits as the branches are united to the vine—were to draw their highest life through him from God, as these branches drew their sap through the stem from the earth, and were to drink in the sun and make the stem glorious by their fruitfulness, as did these branches on the vine; or, to demonstrate their deadness, in contrast with those that did drink in the sun and bear great clusters, and so fail to be what they might be, not because the sap refused to run and the sun to shine, but because they did not turn sap and sun to good account by bringing forth good fruit.

So that the power by which Jesus first drew Peter and John to his side, and held them there, was a personal and perfectly natural power; and we are not to think of it as a mystery, except as the influence of one life and soul over another for good or evil is always a mystery. Attracted to him, this one from his tax-gathering, and that one from his fishing, they had gradually felt the influence of his spirit running through their whole life; were never quite what they ought to be when he did not inspire them; they had no such power to live by as that which in some way they felt flowing out of his nature into theirs; and so they came in the end to see what he meant when he said, "Without me ye can do nothing." If you take a cutting

from a feeble stalk, and graft it on a vigorous stem, the books say the result will be that the graft will show a far greater vigor than it could have shown ungrafted; will reveal in fruit or flower, very clearly, the new stock from which it draws its vitality. It was so with these men. They felt their life grow strong and good in the strength and goodness of their great Friend, and they were to feel it forever, more intensely as the years went on; then they were to send out and take in new branches in their turn; and so the true vine is at last to cover the whole earth. But whether in the world of the apostles, or in the world here and now; in the way Jesus saved Peter, or in the way you are to save the blasphemer, who loves you and is influenced by you as he is by no other man, it is always the lesser growing better by the greater; the weaker being grafted into, and drawing life from, the stronger; the Son of Man forever saved, and sanctified, and fitted for heaven by the Son of God.

So it is well worth our notice that this is, in a great general sense, a prime principle in life; and that, whatever we may say about our individual freedom, the great majority of us are only free as the branch on the vine is free; away back we join into some other personal life for our salvation, and draw from it, as the branch from the stem, our most essential vitality and power—that in a body or in a book, which is the spiritual body of the inspired thinker, some soul, larger and stronger than our own, has got hold of us, and is pouring into us its life, and moulding us this very day.

"I consider," says Dr. Arnold, "beyond all wealth, honor, or even health, is the attachment we form to noble souls; because to become one with the good, generous, and true, is to be, in a measure, good, generous and true yourself."

Now it follows, of course, that this which is at once so natural and universal, must be so far right; because all wrong is unnatural, and, as I am compelled to believe, exceptional. But then it brings up this question: What life, in a body or a book, in earth or in heaven, is the one that can make the most of me, can do most for me, and inspire me to do most for mankind? Let me never be suspected of a want of reverence for a noble gift, for a sweet mastery for good, from whatever source it may come. I am simply to realize that if I can become united to Jesus Christ, as the branch is united to the vine, then I become a part of a life, before which Webster and Hamilton pale in their grasp of the principles we have embodied in our Declaration of Independence; who was deeper in the doctrine

of the fatherhood than Channing, and understood free grace in a way to make Wesley a dreamer; and before whom princes of commercial morality stand with bared heads as they see the great guiding lines of the Sermon on the Mount.

"One who, because he overcomes us so,
Because he is most noble, and a king,
Can well prevail against our fears, and fling
His purple round us, till our hearts do glow
So close against his heart as not to know
How weak they are alone."

This brings me to the true test of this union with Christ, the spiritual truth of the analogy.

And I need not take much time telling you, to begin with, that it is a very common thing for every great branch on this Christian stem to claim to be *the* true branch of the true vine. Now, will not this analogy of the vine and the branches cast precisely the light we need across the spiritual claims of the church and the man, and light up the whole question of what it is to share in this intimate life of Christ in a way that is never to be mistaken? You are all alike in being branches in the one stem.

The sole thing to know is, what fruit do you bear, and how does that fruit compare with what the other branches are bearing? If one branch shall bear only a few dried-up specimens, while others are burdened to breaking, with their great ripe clusters, then the fruit-bearers are the true branches.

When a man lives a noble life, thinks great thoughts, does great things, shames Christian men by the intrinsic beauty and grace of his life, and yet disclaims connection with the Christian stock, I want to know how he has come into life; and, if he is the son of an unbroken succession of Christian ministers and men running directly through many generations, I say, then, that goes a long way to account for it. You are not a graft, but a natural branch of the great vine. It is true that you are able to live isolated from the special Christian line in the world to-day, but it is very doubtful indeed whether you could have done so well if your fathers had not lived in the Christian church of yesterday. If a man says to me, "I do not care for churches and worship; I can worship at home;" and then goes on to tell me how good his good old father, the deacon, used to go to church in New England, I feel like saying, "The truth is, you are a birthright member of the Christian church. Away back you reach into the true vine.

"Tell me what your home worship is doing for the world's salvation, what good fruit

comes from it, and then I will tell you exactly what it is worth. For, if it bring the good fruits of the spirit and life that always come of any genuine worship of God whatever, your course is the next best to that of plunging heart and soul into some real Christian church and movement, such as would best answer to your longing and the world's welfare. But if in your isolation you bear no such fruit, and are aware of an ever-slackening endeavor to do anything noble and good, then, I do not doubt that you are still a branch of the great vine; but every branch that beareth not fruit, He taketh away."

But with these illustrations of what a far-reaching influence this of Christ is to us all, and in the most direct way, and what a strict account it holds with every branch on the stem, I say fearlessly, that this one test is the true test, and there is no other of union with Christ, or how I may know and prove it. I bear fruit, or I do not bear fruit; it is good, or it is not good. When that one thing is made clear, the problem is solved. Wherever you find a man bearing good fruit, there, whether he may know it or not, in a direct personal way, you find a man united to Jesus Christ,—a true branch of the true vine.

And so it is once more, that just as on the vine there is a vast complicated, yet perfect inter-action of one branch on another, as no one branch can possibly exist for itself, but draws in the sunlight to send it down and through the whole vine, sharing what it has got with the others, and sharing what they have got, giving them strength, and getting strength from them; a separate branch in every way, and yet in every way a part of the whole vine, so all these great churches, interests, and influences we call Christian and know to be such, blend beautifully under all their differences and make the perfect whole.

And then again, as in the vine the stem makes the branches strong with its strength, fills them with life out of its heart and supplies the sap, the one prime condition of their fruitfulness; and they, in their turn, cover not themselves alone, but the stem also with glory, in the great ripe clusters they bear for the harvest; so in this true vine, the spirit of Christ, out of which the life of the world comes pouring in a never-ceasing stream, the branches can cover the stem itself with glory and praise.

My final idea of this great, true vine, is that Jesus, who once entered into the heavens, left to the world this legacy, by which he is and is to be more intensely and gloriously present in his risen life than he was when Peter and John sat by his side in Galilee.

We cannot read the life of Christ so as to understand it, until we enter into its spirit. Loyalty to Christ's spirit and work is the best commentary, and the only one that can make Christ altogether clear to us. Go about the Father's business as he did. Send his Gospel far and wide; be ye saviours in your degree; take Christ into your hearts, and then there will be very little trouble about him in your minds. But then never forget that if he is the vine, God is the sun.

There is an awful and unspeakable distinction between the two natures. They can never be the same. He is the true vine, and the whole church—all true, fruitful souls—are the branches. Yet as vine and branch alike would be nothing without the rain and sun, so even this most blessed life of Christ in the soul would be nothing without God, his Father and our Father—God over all, blessed forevermore!—*Robert Collyer.*

THE STILL HOUR.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

Thou Grace Divine, encircling all,
A soundless, shoreless sea,
Wherein at last our souls must fall,—
O Love of God most free!

When over dizzy heights we go,
One soft hand blinds our eyes;
The other leads us safe and slow,—
O Love of God most wise!

And though we turn us from Thy face,
And wander wide and long,
Thou hold'st us still in thine embrace,—
O Love of God most strong!

The saddened heart, the restless soul,
The toil-worn frame and mind,
Alike confess Thy sweet control,—
O Love of God most kind!

But not alone thy care we claim,
Our wayward steps to win:
We know thee by a dearer name,—
O Love of God within!

And, filled and quickened by Thy breath,
Our souls are strong and free
To rise o'er sin and fear and death,
O Love of God, to Thee!

—*Eliza Scudder.*

"He who harms a living thing
Harm to the whole vast world must
bring."

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass. Tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

Offered by Miss L. A. Decker, 4 Mt. Vernon Street, Salem, Mass.: Channing's Works (7 vols.), Gibbon's "Rome" (6 vols.), "Thoughts for Christian Life."

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books and will not offer another list until October or November. Address Miss Eleanor Clarke, "Locust Hill," Rehoboth Street, Needham, Mass. "Nooks and Corners of the New England Coast," S. A. Drake; "Modern British Essayists," Carlyle; "Life and Letters of Washington Irving" (4 vols.); "Life of Mary Baker Eddy," Sybil Wilbur; Thackeray's Poems; "English Traits," Ralph Waldo Emerson; "Flodden Field," Alfred Austin; "The Armies of Europe," Maj.-Gen. George B. McClellan, U.S.A. 1861; "Six Months in Italy" (2 vols.), Hilliard; "An American at Oxford," John Corbin; Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar," small volume of Shakespeare, including "All's Well That Ends Well," "The Taming of the Shrew," "The Comedy of Errors," and "Macbeth"; Sheridan's "The Rivals"; "Self Help for Nervous Women," John K. Mitchell, M.D.; "A Handbook of Composition," Woolley; "Dairy Bacteriology," Prof. H. L. Russell. Novels: "Jane Eyre," Charlotte Brontë; "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Harriet Beecher Stowe; "The Lady of the Aroostook," William Dean Howells; "Pride and Prejudice," Jane Austen; "Northanger Abbey," Jane Austen; "Toilers of the Sea," Victor Hugo; "The Minister's Wooing," Harriet Beecher Stowe; "The Bondman," Hall Caine; "John Halifax, Gentleman," Miss Muloch; "Miss Tommy," Miss Muloch; "Concerning Paul and Fiammetta," L. Allen Harker; "Miss Brooks," Eliza Orne White.

REQUESTS.

1. I am writing to *The Cheerful Letter* for the first time. I am a little girl eleven years old. I live in the country where it is very lonely. My father and mother are getting old and all of my sisters and brothers are married but one, and she is much older than

I, so I have no one to play with me. I should be so glad of some good reading,—books or story papers, and cards. Address Miss Teny Mae Lancaster, Floyd, Virginia, Route 1.

2. Mrs. Annie Griffin, Oakboro, North Carolina, R. D. 1, asks for any good reading. Her husband had the misfortune to lose his right arm in a saw-mill accident.

3. I should be glad to receive a Bible and any books or magazines. I am the mother of two little children, a boy and a girl, and books for them to read will be appreciated. I am interested in crocheting and can crochet some myself. Address Mrs. Belle Wade, Decatur, Tennessee, Route 1.

4. Fred Long, a young lad, will be glad of story books. Address Ansonville, North Carolina, Route 1.

5. Pictures for a family of six small children are asked for by Mrs. Nelia Smith, Oakboro, North Carolina.

6. I appeal to you for a few back numbers of magazines, which our little club of readers is anxious to obtain. First of all is the copy for May, June, and November, 1917, of the *American*. Of the *Cosmopolitan* we have missed the February issue of the year 1917, also December. If it were possible we should also like to get May, June, and July of *McClure's* for the year 1915. Address Mrs. Amelia F. Edwards, Placerville, California.

7. I am very much alone and should greatly appreciate good books or magazines. If reference is desired, address Mr. J. B. Roberson, Dodson, Virginia. From Mrs. J. M. Stone.

8. Alabama Sneed and Otah Morgan of Decatur, Tennessee, Route 2, ask for very light reading.

9. Everett Pace, East Flat Rock, North Carolina, asks for "Black Rock" or some other book of adventure, or stories, or poetry.

10. *Good Housekeeping* is asked for by Mrs. J. R. Hilliard, Nobscot, Mass.

11. I have been receiving *The Cheerful Letter* each month, also several copies of magazines. As my health is bad now and I cannot go anywhere I get very lonesome for reading. Will some of the *Cheerful Letter* friends send some of the following magazines:

Good Housekeeping, *Harper's*, *Woman's Home Companion*, or *The Ladies' World*. Also a good book occasionally; it's so long since I received one. I am grateful for anything. Address Mrs. John R. Harris, Pedlar Mills, Virginia.

12. I thank the *Cheerful Letter* friends for the patchwork pieces, also embroidery cotton and embroidery magazines. I should be glad to receive a guitar chord book and first lessons for guitar. Also, Farrar's "Life of Christ" for my mother. My brother's and sister's birthdays are the 19th and 20th of April. I should like "Among the Farmyard People" for them, and any good story books, such as Miss Alcott's, for myself. Address Miss Eva C. Hughes, Burrville, Morgan Co., Tennessee.

13. I get *The Cheerful Letter* each month. Please let me tell the readers a little about myself. The thirteenth of April is my birthday, and I shall have been married fifty years the thirteenth of June. I have been confined to my bed and room thirty-nine years. I am very poor so far as this world's goods are concerned. I should like to receive good books for myself and grandchildren, or anything that would help and cheer and make home and life brighter. Please send books to Mrs. Porter Woosley, Maniataw, Kentucky, for Irene aged ten, Aubrey aged eight, Eileen aged six. They live away back in the woods at a saw-mill; no church, no Sunday-school—nothing but the tent they live in and the woods. They are worthy and would be happy to get children's books. Please surprise them as they don't know I am asking this for them. I should like one or two correspondents that could send stamps. Address Mrs. Anna Teague, Nortonville, Kentucky, Route 2, Box 18.

14. I thank all the *Cheerful Letter* ladies for the reading I have received; but it has seemed quite lonely now for a while, as I have received nothing for some time. I should appreciate reading of any kind now in this stress of war. Would some of the ladies please send me some scraps suitable for patchwork, as my little girl wishes to learn to work, and owing to the little ones, I have to clothe I do not have any to spare her, and it grieves me to see such an opportunity pass when she is so eager to learn to work. I am very poor and my husband has but one leg. Address Mrs. L. J. Haynes, Sanville, Virginia.

15. May I trespass upon the kindness of the *Cheerful Letter* friends to secure for me

one Physical Geography, one Advanced Geography, an advanced English Grammar, and a History of Greece? I am in need of these for summer pupils and should appreciate your help. I am glad to say that we are very happy here and enjoy our new work very much. William A. Alleyne, Ridgeville, Indiana.

16. Lewis W. Hicks, Monroe, Virginia, asks for any of Henty's books and *Youth's Companion*, 1918. His mother would like *McCall's Magazine*.

17. Addie Vaughn, Athens, Tennessee, Route 8, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal*; back numbers will be welcome.

18. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is asked for by Mrs. Bruce Parkhill, Gainsville, Texas, Route 2, Box 27.

19. Mrs. H. G. Brown, Elamsville, Virginia, will be glad to receive any literature for children aged seven and nine years.

20. Papers or stories are asked for, for a sick boy who has lain on one side for fifteen months. Address Dewey Brooks, Jones Store, Virginia.

21. Mrs. N. B. Strickland, Swepsonville, North Carolina, whose husband is the circuit minister, asks for magazines, especially the *Mother's Magazine*, and papers, books, or pictures suitable for Sunday-school. Any help will be thankfully received.

22. I thank the readers of *The Cheerful Letter* for the books and magazines which they have sent me. It has been a special help to me in my studies. I am now studying the Greek language. I should like to get a Greek New Testament and other books in Greek. I should like also to get some of Orison Swett Marden's books and some of William Walker Atkinson's, and *The Nautilus* or *Advanced Thought* magazines, and *The Musician*. B. F. Capps, Hendersonville, North Carolina, Route 1, Box 112.

23. Mrs. L. J. Wilson, 222 E Ave., Lawton, Oklahoma, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal* and a child's book.

Never to tire, never to grow cold, to be patient, sympathetic, tender; to look for the budding flower and the opening heart; to hope always, like God; to love always,—this is duty.—*Amiel's Journal*.

MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

THE TEASING BROTHER.

Scene V.

THOMAS. *Afterward* ORKNEY.

A road, with avenues of trees on each side. Thomas is walking under the trees in a pensive manner, but looking along the road every now and then, as if he expected some one.

Thomas. I did not think of its troubling Lucilla so much, and I am determined not to trouble her any more. I am determined not to trouble her or any other girls. If I trouble anybody, it shall be some boy as big as I am, who will be able to pay me back. *(He looks along the road.)* I wish Orkney would come. He goes to the post-office every afternoon to get the boys' letters, and he usually comes back just about this time. If I could see him, he'd tell me what I had better do. He always knows what it is best to do. There he is now! he's coming! I verily believe. *(He looks along the road eagerly.)* No, it is not he; it's another boy. Ah! he's turned down the other road. I'm glad of it. I only want to see Orkney. I can't bear to have Edward go and tell all the other boys that I should only tease the girls if they invited me to go with them; but I don't see how I can help it. Perhaps Orkney can find some way to help it. He can always find some way of doing everything. Ah! here he comes. He has the letter-bag in his hand.

Enter ORKNEY, with a leathern bag in his hand.

Thomas. Ah! Orkney, I am glad you have come. You are just the fellow that I want to see.

Orkney. Yes, but I can't stop to talk with you now. I'm on duty. See!

(He holds up the bag.)

Thomas. Yes, I know very well that you never will stop when you're on duty, as you call it; but I want you to help me very much.

Orkney. Then you must walk along with me, for I must go on with the letters. The boys are always very impatient to get their letters. That's the reason, they said, why they appointed me postmaster, because they knew that I would not stop by the way when I went for the letters.

Thomas. Well, I will tell you at once what it is. You see, the boys have got a plan of an excursion to Mount Talbot, and Edward says that they are not going to invite me.

Orkney. Oh, you are mistaken about that for I was with them when the plan was formed; and when your name was mentioned some thought that you were too young, but

Edward said he thought you would do. He said that you could drive very well indeed; so they concluded to invite you, for they wanted some good drivers.

Thomas. Yes, but now Edward has altered his mind.

Orkney. Altered his mind?

Thomas. He says now that he thinks am not old enough, and he is going to tell all the other boys so.

Orkney. That's very strange! What could have led him to alter his mind?

Thomas. I'm sure I don't know. Yes, I do know, I suppose. He says he is afraid that shall tease and trouble the girls; but I should not do any such thing.

Orkney. It is very surprising. What can have put such an idea as that into his head? What makes him think that you could tease and trouble the girls?

Thomas. Why, he says (*hesitating*) that tease and trouble Lucilla.

Orkney. Ah! that explains it. Now I begin to get a little light. You have been making fun of poor Lucilla, and teasing and troubling her, and so Edward thinks it is not safe to have you join the pleasure party, with so many girls in it.

Thomas. I'm sure I should not trouble the girls the least in the world. And, besides, I am determined not to trouble Lucilla any more, at any rate, whether I go on the excursion or not.

Orkney. Really?

Thomas (*in a very positive manner*). Yes, I am really and truly, because I think it is wrong.

Orkney. I don't think so very hard of you for it as some people might, though I think it is very wrong. But boys like you are very often doing such things. I've known boys a good deal older than you to do them. You see, you ought to make Lucilla some atonement for the pain and trouble you have already given her.

Thomas. How shall I do it?

Orkney. Why, you must contrive some way to please and gratify her, and that will show her at once that you are going to change your course.

Thomas. Well, I should like to do that very much; but what shall I do?

Orkney. Oh, you must contrive some way yourself. You had ingenuity enough to devise ways to tease her, and now it would be very strange if you could not contrive ways to give her pleasure. Besides, what you do will give her much more pleasure if you contrive it yourself than if it is something that somebody else has contrived for you.

Thomas. Well, I'll see. But then, Orkney, I don't like to have Edward tell all the boys and girls that he don't want me to go with the party because he thinks I should be a plague to them. But I don't see how I can prevent it.

Orkney. I should not wish to have him tell them so, if I were you. A good character is worth everything. But that will all come right of itself if you only do right. You may depend upon that. If, at any time, we lose our character by doing wrong, we always get it back again soon by doing right. We can never get a lost character back by running after it. I advise you to say nothing and do nothing except to turn square about in respect to Lucilla, and you will see that everything else will all come right soon.

THOMAS alone.

The garden. On the right, a border of roses and other flowers. On the left, fruit-trees, and among the rest a tall and slender pear-tree leaning to one side. Thomas enters with a long stake and piece of twine.

Thomas. Lucilla's tree was somewhere in this border. She asked me to stake it up for her some time ago. Ah! here it is. Yes, it is leaning over all to one side. But I have got a good stake and some twine, and I'll stake it up for her as straight as an arrow.

[He drives the stake down by the side of the tree, and then ties the tree to it neatly with pieces of his twine, talking to himself as he does it.]

There! that will please her for one thing, I know. She is very particular about her tree. She planted it herself, she says, when she was a very little girl; and now see how tall it has grown! It is higher than my head.

I wonder where she has gone. (*He looks about the garden.*) I wish she was here now to see how straight her tree looks. But I suppose she has gone in. I wish I could see her, to tell her that I'm not going to trouble her any more. But then I don't know how I should tell her if she was here. Ah! I see her now. There! she is just going out of the garden gate. (*He calls.*) LUCILLA! LUCILLA! LUCILLA! Stop! I want to speak to you. She will not stop. She is running off as fast as she can go. She is afraid of me; and I don't wonder at it. It makes me feel quite ashamed. Certainly, a girl ought not to have any reason to be afraid of her brother.

What shall I do to show her that she need not be afraid of me any more? (*He looks upon the border of flowers.*) Ah! I see. I'll make her a bouquet. Girls always like flowers, especially when the giving of the flowers to them has any particular meaning. So I'll make her a bouquet, and leave it in her room. I'll write a little note to tell her

the flowers are for her, and who left them there.

[He proceeds to gather a blush rose and some other flowers. He makes a bouquet by placing the rose in the centre, and the other flowers around it, and ties up the whole by means of a piece of his string.]

There! Now I'll go into the house, and get a piece of paper and write the note. I'll write it as well as I can.

LUCILLA. Afterward EDWARD.

A pretty bed-room. On one side of the room, a bed with curtains. On the other side, a bureau between two windows. At the farther end, a bay window with a table in it. Upon the table, a small bouquet of flowers in a glass, with a note upon the table before it.

Enter LUCILLA, looking sorrowful.

Lucilla. I saw Thomas running off out of my room just as I was coming to it. He has been here, I suppose, to play me some new trick. I must look all about my room to see what he has been doing. The chairs are all right, I see. Sometimes he comes in and turns them all upside down to trouble me. *(She looks about the room.)* I don't see anything that he has done. *(She spies the bouquet upon the table.)* Ah! here are some flowers. I wonder who put these pretty flowers here! And here is a note. Who could have written it? It is a note for me.

[She opens the note and reads.]

"DEAR LUCILLA."

But let me first see whose name is at the bottom of it. *(She turns to the end of the note to look at the name.)* Why, it is from Thomas. I'll begin and read it all through.

"DEAR LUCILLA,

"I have straightened up your pear-tree, and fastened it nicely to a stake. I also brought these flowers for you. I could not tie them up very well, for I don't know how to make such pretty bouquets as you can. But the principal thing I sent it to you for is the rose. It is the prettiest little blush rose that I could find, and it is exactly the color of your cheeks. If it had been any prettier, it would have been more like your cheeks.

"This is the real truth. What I said before was only bad and foolish joking.

THOMAS.

"P.S.—I'm going to be a better boy, and not trouble you any more."

How glad I am! The dear little rose! What a pretty color! And how delicate! I am very glad that Thomas sent it to me. And what a pretty note it is! *(She looks at the writing.)* How well it is written! It looks as if a young gentleman wrote it. I did not think that Thomas could write so well.

Hark! Somebody is coming. I'll show them my bouquet, and see if they don't think it is a beautiful one.

Enter EDWARD.

Edward. Ah! Lucilla, here you are! have been out into the garden to find you, but you were not there. I wanted to tell you that we are going to change our plans about the excursion, and not let Thomas go.

Lucilla. Ah! yes, Cousin Edward, do let him go.

Edward. Why, Lucilla, I should not think you would wish to have him go, he is such a plague to you.

Lucilla. But, Cousin Edward, he says he is not going to plague me any more.

Edward. You can't trust to such boy's promises. He may easily make promises, but he will find it very hard to keep them. I will not be very easy for him to change. It is not a little change that is required. He will have to turn right square about, and that it will be very hard for him to do.

Lucilla. But he has done it, Cousin Edward; he has turned square about. See this pretty bouquet that he has given me, and see this note, and read it.

[Edward takes the note and reads.]

Edward *(in a tone of great satisfaction)*. Well, that looks as if he was in earnest, really. That is coming to the point just like a man.

Lucilla. I wish you would let him go with us. I am almost sure that he will not do anything to trouble us.

Edward *(hesitating)*. I am glad, on the whole, that I have not told any of the others about it yet.

Lucilla. Then you have not told them?

Edward. No, I was going to see some of the party now; but, since I have seen this note, I think I shall say nothing about it. We'll let him go with us. We'll try him this time, at any rate; but, as soon as I find him going back to his old tricks again—

Lucilla. Oh, he won't go back, I'm sure.

Edward. I don't think he will mislead me. But I must go. Good-by.

[He goes out.]

Lucilla. *(She puts the note away carefully in a drawer, and fastens the bouquet in her bosom.)* I'll keep the note very carefully. And this bouquet—I'll go and show it to Jane. It is the dearest little bouquet I ever had in my life; and the note is even prettier than the bouquet.—Orkney the Peacemaker by Jacob Abbott.

Great effort from great motives is the best definition of a happy life.—Channing.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE GREAT BLUE HERON.

One of the most majestic and picturesque of the birds which frequent the shores of our lakes and ponds is the great blue heron. Gliding about with stately grace in the shallow waters, he adds a peculiarly artistic touch to many an otherwise monotonous landscape.

Now and then his long, sharp, sword-like bill pierces the still water with lightning-like speed, and invariably emerges with a wriggling fish or water-dog; articles which form a large proportion of his food.

As the twilight shadows deepen into dusk he spreads his enormous wings—wings out of all proportion to the size of his body—and with a hoarse, guttural croak, his long neck doubled over his back, his long legs stretching behind, he wings his silent way back to the ponderous nest resting high in the top of the largest and most inaccessible tree. In this great nest of coarse sticks are four or five large sky-blue eggs, or an equal number of the homeliest, scrawniest nestlings imaginable, with an insatiable appetite and the rather discourteous habit of disgorging the contents of their gullets when disturbed or frightened.

These fine birds are found throughout temperate America, usually nesting in colonies from a dozen to several thousand pairs, and are migratory. In some localities—as for instance the islands in Great Salt Lake—the nests are built upon the ground, while in others they are built in low shrubs or trees in the depths of impenetrable swamps, but former persecution has taught the great majority of them to resort to the highest trees for safety.

The great blue herons have no injurious feeding habits except for the few fish—usually of little species of commercial value—which they consume; they are a distinct attraction in the localities which they frequent, and, thanks to the wise regulations recently put into effect by the United States Biological Survey under the provisions of the new federal migratory bird law, are now rigidly protected throughout the United States.—*Our Dumb Animals.*

If we are Christians, we shall love all souls, calling no man common or unclean, believing in the brotherhood of the race, finding something good in every one,—a vital seed of nobleness in the most deadened bosom.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

A FAIR DAY.

In the glad sunshine of this perfect day,
My God, I feel thee near.

Thy presence is around me; and I lay
All other thoughts aside from me, and say,
Thou art abiding here.

As free as the blue heaven my heart beats now,
And light as the sweet air
Which seems to kiss all clouds from sky and brow,
And every sinking thought with strength endow

To rise above despair.
As some sad dream, the dark hours of my life
Seem to have passed away.
The doubting days, the mind's tormenting strife,
The tortured thoughts, the awful passions, rife
In the soul gone astray,

Have been forgotten in the wondrous calm
Of hope renewed for me,
As if, with the charmed healing of its balm,
From these the absolving touch of some blest palm
Set me forever free.

In the glad sunshine of this perfect day,
My God, I feel thee near;
And, when the night has fallen and the way
Is dark before me, make for me, I pray,
Thy presence then as clear.
—Howard Fremont Stratton.

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

THE RAINBOW-WINGED SPIRIT.

Arnolt dreamed one night that a beautiful Spirit with rainbow wings stood before him, surrounded by radiant light. He sprang forward to seize it, but a cold gust blew across the room and darkness pressed around. He rose and looked forth into the night. Nothing was to be seen except rays from the lighthouse far over the sea, and the stars which like points of steel shone in the sky. A solemn silence filled the air.

As the dawn reddened in the East, a pale light glimmered over the bare fields. All looked gray and desolate. Arnolt exclaimed: "I will go and seek the radiant Spirit. I must find him or die." So he went forth. As he walked along the fields, now and then the dewdrops caught rainbow-colors from the morning light. But he dashed them aside, saying: "I will not be deceived. These are not the wings of the Spirit."

Soon he came to a clear still pool into which the young spring flowers were gazing. The swift birds dipped their wings as they flew

by; brilliant butterflies hovered round; tall trees bent gracefully over; and all was so clearly reflected that there seemed to be an enchanted world below.

"This must be the home of the Spirit," said Arnolt; and he threw himself down to gaze into the pool. Sunlight sparkled on golden sand; gay fishes darted to and fro; and the mirrored leaves danced merrily. Every now and then Arnolt started when a bird fluttered by, for he thought the beautiful Spirit had come. But the morning hours passed and he caught no glimpse of the radiant one. At last he rose and went on his way.

Before him stood a high mountain upon whose summit the sun was shining brilliantly. He said, "There does the Spirit dwell!"

With eager steps he ascended, leaving behind him the woods and flowers and entering a region of bare, dreary rocks. At length he gained the top. Cold snows gleamed around him, the winds sighed as they passed by, and he was all alone upon that glittering height. He stretched out his arms imploringly into the blue sky, but all was silent there.

At length he beheld among the snow-peaks a figure round which bright rainbow colors were playing. He pressed joyfully toward it, for he thought it was surely the Spirit; but as he approached, he discovered it was merely a statue of ice from which the sunbeams were reflected. Disappointed and weary, he knew not whither to turn. He looked down into the valley below him and as he saw wreaths of smoke curling up through the trees and the fields lying peacefully around he said: "I must go among men. Perhaps the Spirit dwells there."

He had not descended far when he came to a number of men who were building a palace. When he saw its high towers and pinnacles shining in the air, he said: "They are surely building a home for the Spirit. Here will he come to live." And he began to assist them with such zeal that in a short time the palace was finished. But when he passed through the stately halls he found only statues and pictures there. Then the men led him to a magnificent throne, saying, "You have been the most active in our service, and you must be our king."

He consented; for he thought the Spirit would come to him amidst all this splendor. They placed a crown on his head and a scepter in his hand. They danced and sang before him and surrounded him with beautiful things; but he looked on it all with sad eyes. Every person near him was adorned with sparkling gems; but he observed that every face was pale and careworn. The Spirit of his dream was not there.

From the window he saw below him crowds of poor people hungry and half-clad, who were gazing with longing eyes upon the splendid palace. He said to himself, "The Spirit will not come to me while I am crowned with jewels and those poor people are suffering."

He invited them all in, and his throne was broken into a thousand pieces and distributed among them. He threw his crown on the ground, and said: "There must be no king among us. If one would be happy, we must all be happy together."

Then the people rejoiced, and knelt to thank him. Some of them embraced him with tears in their eyes. The children ran from room to room admiring such statues as they had never dreamed of and pictures of more wonderful things than they had ever seen. He was glad to see how happy they were; but the beautiful Spirit was not among them.

As the sun was setting, he thought to himself: "I seek the radiant one in vain. Whither shall I turn?" Then came the remembrance of his wife and child, by his own happy fireside. He said, "I will go home and play with my little child."

As he drew near his house, bright firelight streamed out into the gray evening, and the trees on which it fell seemed to be peeping into the windows. Flowers shone by the path at his feet, and looked up at him with love. As he drew nearer, sweet low music breathed round the house, and the little birds waked up in their nests to listen.

He entered the house. There sat his wife with their child by the bright fire, and the Rainbow-Winged Spirit stood beside them with folded wings, holding their hands in his, and singing the sweetest song he had ever heard in his life.—*Rainbows for Children, by L. Maria Child.*

MINSTRELS OF THE MORNING.

The morning chorus of the spring is a wonderful performance, and the only price of admission is early waking. With the first glint of daylight in the east here and there a faint chirp will break upon the ear as some sleeping bird awakes; then as each performer tunes his pipe, little trills and bits of song are heard. These increase in number and variety, until with the coming of full day the air is filled with melody. This continues for an hour or more; then one by one the singers drop out for breakfast and household duties, and during the day only fragments of songs are heard.

Again, as evening comes on, the dainty

minstrels express their gratitude for the blessings of the happy day, and the evening chorus most rivals in variety and excellence that of the morning. It continues until the shades of night are drawn, when each faithful chorister, seeking a secluded nook near his nest, tucks his head under his wing, and sleeps till the new morn flushes the east again, for "early to bed and early to rise" is the rule in bird land.—From "*Birds Through the Year*" by Gilbert Field Gilmore.

HER CREED.

This the substance of her creed;
Gentle word, and kindly deed;
Simplest truth, to hold and heed;
Help for those who stand in need.

Lightsome cheer, and honest thought;
Faithful work in patience wrought;
Honour, neither sold, nor bought;
Flattering praises never sought.

Tender love for hearts that bleed;
Faith in sowing precious seed;
Rightful cause to help and speed—
Not for fame, nor gold, nor greed.

Gilded book, nor costly fane,
Are not needed, to contain—
Neither preacher to explain—
Creed so simple, and so plain.
—*Mary C. Billings.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

REARRANGEMENTS.

1. Rearrange the letters of the name Andrew and make a word meaning to ramble; rearrange again and make the keeper of a prison; again, and make what we do to the holes in our stockings; again, and make a number of battles and a boy's nickname; again, and make not cooked and the same nickname.

2. Rearrange the letters of the name Mary and make another girl's name; rearrange again and make a body of soldiers.

—*The Mayflower.*

II.

TWISTED PRESIDENTS.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Dvelncela. | 6. Oiwnls. |
| 2. Eynabrmu | 7. Fnjreosef. |
| 3. Rihoansr. | 8. Fegdailr. |
| 4. Cabhunna. | 8. Iwnoghastn. |
| 5. Vtoreleos. | 10. Honjsno. |

—*The Beacon.*

III.

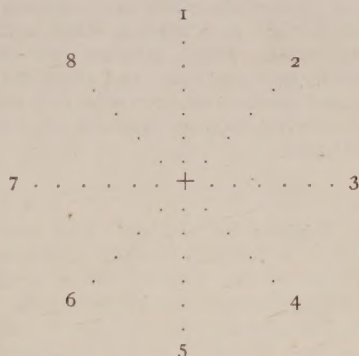
MIXED WORD SQUARE.

DRPOPAGOEREGRERE

Rearrange the above sixteen letters into four words that will form a word square.

IV.

A WHEEL.



The central letter of this wheel is the first letter of each of the eight words composing it:—

1. Confused, unintelligible language.
2. A short coat without skirts.
3. To sound discordantly.
4. An opaque impure quartz.
5. A small Spanish horse.
6. One of the members of a Roman Catholic order.
7. Given to jesting.
8. Dense growth of brushwood.

Answers to the puzzles in the May number.

I. LITERARY CONTEST: Waverley; The Heart of Midlothian; Henry Esmond; The Leavenworth Case; The Deliverance; The Lieutenant Governor; The District Attorney.

II. BEHEADED RHYMES: Wheat, heat, eat. Blend, lend, end. Skill, kill, ill.

III. PECULIAR ARITHMETIC: Third Liberty Loan.

IV. CHARACTERISTIC INITIALS: 1. Israel Putnam. 2. Charles Sumner. 3. Ethan Allen. 4. George A. Henty. 5. George Peabody.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

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